

Five years from Paris: Greens in COP warning to host Governments



12 December 2020

Elected Greens across the UK have challenged the UK and Scottish Governments to play more of a leadership role at the COP26 climate conference in Glasgow, if it is to become a successful platform for global change.

Marking five years since the signing of the Paris Agreement in 2015, which saw 196 countries agree to keep the increase in global average temperature to well below 2 degrees Celsius, Green representatives have warned that as hosts UK and Scotland must bring more to the table than targets.

A UN report this week revealed the world is on track for an average temperature rise of 3 degrees Celsius. [1]

Both the UK and Scottish Governments have set targets to reduce emissions without committing to the actions to urgently meet them.

In a joint statement [2], Greens have called for the UK to follow Denmark and others to stop exploration for new oil and gas and to make sure countries in the global south, who contribute least to but are most impacted by the climate breakdown, are both heard and supported at the talks.

Commenting, Green MP Caroline Lucas said: "If COP26 is to be a success, and it has to be, the Government cannot just wing it. It has to start showing the essential leadership role that the French played in the run-up to Paris, and that means not just setting climate targets, but introducing the policies and climate action needed to start delivering on them.

"And it must reverse the decision to cut the international aid budget at a time when those least responsible for climate breakdown are facing the worst impacts in the form of more severe droughts, flooding and food insecurity."

Scottish Greens co-leader Patrick Harvie MSP, who represents Glasgow, said: "The COP summit in Glasgow is an enormous opportunity to bring new impetus to

the global push to ensure our survival. And with a change of leadership in the United States, we have fresh hope that we can address the fact that the last four years have not seen the action required by Governments.

“As host nations, the Scottish and UK Governments must bring more than targets to the table if this conference is going to be a success. They must wake up to the need to transition from fossil fuels and end their obsession with expansion of roads and air travel.”

Northern Irish Greens leader and MLA Clare Bailey said: “Denmark is the latest country to end exploration for new oil and gas. It’s time for the UK to show leadership on this and do the same before COP26. Meanwhile, the Northern Ireland Executive must introduce climate change legislation and legislated climate targets as a matter of urgency.”

The statement has been signed by the Scottish Green MSPs, Green Party of England and Wales MP Caroline Lucas and peers Natalie Bennett and Jenny Jones, and Green members of the Northern Irish assembly Clare Bailey and Rachel Woods.

ENDS

Notes

1

https://www.reuters.com/article/climate-change-emissions-idUKKBN28J16B?taid=5fd0d4e7f0e12b00013d9a24&utm_campaign=trueAnthem:+Trending+Content&utm_medium=trueAnthem&utm_source=twitter

2

Joint statement sent to all UK Governments:

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1dlMJh8iYv7ve625-7xN5yNahEuXjM7fL/view?usp=sharing>

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[Caroline Lucas responds to government ending support for fossil fuels](#)

overseas



11 December 2020

The Prime Minister is due to announce ending UK support for fossil fuel projects around the world.

Green Party MP Caroline Lucas said:

“It is good to see the Prime Minister have such a dramatic change of heart. Just three days ago, when I asked him in Parliament to end UK Export Finance’s support for fossil fuel projects overseas, he maintained that hydrocarbons ‘remain a significant industry’ for a number of countries around the world. [1]

“This is a long overdue policy shift from the Government and a victory for all who have campaigned for change. As hosts of COP26 it was untenable for the UK Government to continue fuelling the climate crisis by pouring taxpayers’ money into fossil fuels overseas.

“That said, it’s vital that there is a moratorium on any future funding for fossil fuels overseas until the results of the consultation are known, so that new projects aren’t rushed out of the door in the next few months.

“I hope the Prime Minister will also urgently have a similar change of heart on the Government’s climate-wrecking £27 billion road building plans, and their continued subsidies to the fossil fuel industry.”

ENDS

Notes

1

At Prime Minister’s Questions on Wednesday 9 December, in reply to a question on UK Export Finance from Caroline Lucas, Boris Johnson insisted that “hydrocarbons remain a significant industry in Scotland and many other places. In so far as there are legitimate contracts that are at risk of being

frustrated, we cannot do that.”

<https://hansard.parliament.uk/commons/2020-12-09/debates/B62126B2-4224-4830-9347-4174775A88E7/Engagements>

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[Green Party motion to demand basic income pilot in Islington is passed](#)



10 December 2020

Islington Council has this evening passed a Green Party motion, amended by Labour, calling on the government to trial a basic income in the borough in response to the economic shock of the coronavirus crisis. It is the first London borough to do so.

The Council will now write to the secretary of state for Work and Pensions and the Chancellor to ask for a UBI trial in the borough of Islington after passing the motion this evening.

This comes just over a month after Labour Assembly Members did not vote to pass a motion put forward by Green Party AM and candidate for Mayor of London Sian Berry to call for a trial over the whole of London. [1]

Green Party councillor and London Assembly member Caroline Russell said:

“Universal Basic Income is an idea whose time has come. As the Covid crisis deepens and Brexit looms, the need to provide security to every single person has never been greater.

"As we build back from this pandemic, it just makes sense to give people a non means tested payment providing the security of an economic floor below which they cannot fall. Not a safety net with holes, but a solid foundation upon which each and every person can stand and build from together.

"I hope that Labour members of the London Assembly will now take inspiration from their colleagues at a local level here in Islington and back a trial of Universal Basic Income for Londoners."

ENDS

1

<https://www.london.gov.uk/press-releases/assembly/sin-berry/london-assembly-kicks-basic-income-into-long-grass>

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[Greens condemn Conservatives for failing at most basic requirements of government over Brexit negotiations](#)



10 December 2020

- Molly Scott Cato: "With car plants closing, supermarkets stockpiling, and businesses unable to prepare for an unknown future the government is creating a totally unnecessary emergency"

Responding to the bleak news emerging from Brussels last night, former MEP

and Green Party Brexit speaker Molly Scott Cato said:

“The UK government have totally misjudged this negotiation, preferring to believe their fantasies about sovereignty and Global Britain rather than understanding their partner’s negotiating position and seeking common ground.

“With car plants closing, supermarkets stockpiling, and businesses unable to prepare for an unknown future the government is creating a totally unnecessary emergency. It was their decision to refuse an extension period even in the face of the Covid pandemic, an ideologically motivated misjudgment of historic proportions.

“Many people voted for Brexit in the belief that things would only improve for them. But from 1st January those traveling to the EU will face the prohibitive cost of travel insurance for those with chronic health conditions, the need for a new driving licence and green card for drivers, and complication and expense if taking dogs, cats or other animals with them.

“These are all issues we raised during the referendum campaign more than four years ago and that Vote Leave campaigners who are now ministers dismissed as Project Fear.’

“In the middle of two desperate and unavoidable crises – Covid and climate – the Tories are creating a third that is entirely avoidable and failing at the most basic requirement of government: to ensure safety and security for their citizens.”

The Green Party’s position remains that we should seek to remain members of the EU single market and customs union, providing the best environment for business and continuing free movement for citizens.

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[Green Party condemns extreme and violent measures taken by police forces across India against farmers](#)

[engaged in peaceful demonstration](#)



10 December 2020

Satnam Deuchakar, international policy officer for Greens of Colour, said:

“The Green Party of England and Wales fights for social and climate justice. We support the farmers in India who are resisting market-driven legal changes that will destroy their livelihoods. And we defend their fundamental right to peaceful protest as the cornerstone of any functioning democracy.

“The images emerging of the use of water cannons and tear gas against an unarmed group of citizens are deeply concerning. This action goes against the fundamental right to peaceful protest as enshrined in Articles 9 to 11 of the European Convention on Human Rights and the 1966 International Convention on Civil and Political Rights.

“Farmers are the backbone of the Indian economy and are protesting peacefully against the mass privatization of the agricultural sector and unjust and damaging changes to farming laws. We urge the Indian government to return to the negotiating table and to seek peaceful measures to resolve the situation.

“The Green Party of England and Wales stands in solidarity with the Indian farmers.”

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